

FROM POLICY TO ACTION

STEPS TO
IMPLEMENTING
YOUR LOCAL

Wellness

POLICY



Minnesota
Department
of **Education**

*Food and
Nutrition Service*

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Food and Nutrition Service
2007

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Minnesota Department of Education

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Minnesota Department of Education

FROM POLICY TO ACTION

Steps to Implementing Your Local Wellness Policy

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Your district has a wellness policy. What's next?

Schools across Minnesota are working to improve student health and learning by implementing local wellness policies.

This guide, **From Policy to Action: Steps to Implementing Your Local Wellness Policy**, is designed to assist those with responsibility for policy implementation, including:

- District administrators
- School building administrators
- Wellness policy implementation team leaders and members assigned responsibility for policy implementation. These include district or school staff members, students, parents, community members or other individuals dedicated to making schools healthier places.

Role of the school district

The purpose of implementing a local wellness policy is to promote better nutrition, nutrition education and more physical activity for all students.

School boards and superintendents play an important role in the implementation process. They can:

- Ensure implementation of the school's wellness policy;
- Encourage and support wellness policy implementation efforts;
- Determine which policy goals are best implemented at the district level and which should be implemented at the school building level;
- Assign district-level staff to manage district-level implementation; and
- Assign school administrators in each building to oversee school-level implementation.

Five steps from policy to action

This guide presents a process to help your district or school move from a wellness policy to action – to make wellness an ongoing part of your school community. It includes a section for each of the five steps:

Step 1 Get Started: *Build your team*

Step 2 Assess: *Understand your school environment*

Step 3 Plan: *Develop your action plan and carry it out*

Step 4 Measure: *Evaluate your progress*

Step 5 Review: *Update the plan*



Each section includes:

Key Point

Highlights the central idea of each step.

Suggested Activities

Describes activities involved in each step.

Tips

Presents suggestions for implementing each step.

Your Notes

Provides space for you to jot down your ideas and plans for each step.

STEP 1 GET STARTED *Build your team (continued)*

Key Point
Convene the team and provide an orientation about the local wellness policy. Familiarize the team with the rationale for the wellness policy and the requirements of the law.

TIP
• Provide an orientation as new members are added to your team.

TOOLS to orient your team

FACT SHEET:
The Link Between Student Health and Achievement pgs. 13-14
Use to inform team members or others in your school community about the rationale for the wellness policy implementation.

FACT SHEET:
Federal Legislation: Local Wellness Policy Law (Public Law 108-265, Section 204) pg. 15
Use to inform team members or others in the school community.

POWERPOINT® PRESENTATION:
Wellness Policy Implementation Overview pgs. 17-22
Use to inform your team, school board, school staff or other groups. The presentation can be downloaded from <http://education.state.mn.us>. Click on Food and Nutrition Service, then click on Health and Wellness. The slides can be printed as handouts. Presentation talking points are included on the note pages.

TOOLS to inform your school community

WORKSHEET:
Communication planning pgs. 23-24
Use to identify and plan communications to support implementation at every step in the process. See *Tips for Effective Communication* on pg. 69 for suggestions.

SAMPLE LETTER to parents/families pg. 25
Send letters on school letterhead and keep to one page. Each year, revise the sample letter to inform families of new activities coming up.

SAMPLE ARTICLE for school newsletter and website pg. 26
Keep your school community informed by including regular updates in your school newsletter, website and school events. Each year, present updates in your school newsletter and on the website.

SAMPLE MEMO to school staff pg. 27
Use to inform faculty and other school staff about the wellness policy implementation plan. Edit for your situation. Each year present updates to staff.

Microsoft® Word versions of these tools can be downloaded from <http://education.state.mn.us>.

STEP 1 GET STARTED *Build your team (continued)*

Key Point
Here are some questions to consider. Jot down your ideas and plans here.

Who will be the school administrator to oversee and support the wellness policy implementation plans?

What existing group or team could provide leadership for wellness policy implementation? Do we need additional members? If so, who?

Should we form a new wellness policy implementation team? If so, who should be recruited as members? How can we involve students?

Who might be the team leader or champion for our group?

When should we convene the group? How often should we meet? What information and tools do we need?

What do we need to communicate at this point? What methods should we use? What are our key messages? When? To whom?

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – WELLNESS POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Tools

Provides handouts, samples, planning worksheets and resources to assist you in implementing each step.

PLUS, Resources section *(page 53)*

Presents information on measurement and effective communication as well as a list of wellness policy resources.

STEP **1** GET STARTED

Build your team



Wellness is a team effort across the entire school community.

Identify a team to lead the wellness policy implementation. This group is responsible for assessing the school environment, creating the action plan, measuring results and communicating and reviewing progress on a regular basis.

TIPS

- *Consider assigning the wellness policy implementation to an existing group with a similar mission (e.g., Safe and Drug Free Schools committee, health council, etc.).*
- *Or form a new team just for this purpose.*
- *Include on the team representatives of key content areas and stakeholders in the school community, such as:*
 - *School board members*
 - *School food service director*
 - *School nurse*
 - *Teachers - elementary, physical and health education, family and consumer sciences*
 - *Parents*
 - *Students*
 - *School-wide organizations*
 - *Community members such as representatives of local health agencies.*

Identify a key school administrator to oversee the team and ensure that it becomes a priority of the school community. The administrator can approve and support the implementation plans.

Name a team leader or "champion" to lead the implementation process.

Select a team leader with leadership skills, the time and energy to devote to the process and a strong interest in school health and wellness.

TIPS

- *At the district level, the team leader might be the superintendent, assistant superintendent, curriculum director, health services coordinator or other staff.*
- *At the school level, the team leader might be a principal, teacher, school nurse, parent or community member interested in wellness issues.*

TOOLS to help you build your team

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Wellness Policy Implementation Teampg. 11
Use to recruit or orient members of the team responsible for wellness policy implementation. Customize the job description for your own situation.

CHECKLIST AND ROSTER:

Wellness Policy Implementation Team pg. 12
Use to ensure that the committee charged with wellness policy implementation includes individuals with the necessary expertise and skills.

Build your team *(continued)*

Convene the team and provide an orientation about the local wellness policy. Familiarize the team with the rationale for the wellness policy and the requirements of the law.

TIP

- *Provide an orientation as new members are added to your team.*

TOOLS to orient your team

FACT SHEET:

The Link Between Student Health and Achievement pgs. 13-14
Use to inform team members or others in your school community about the rationale for the wellness policy implementation.

FACT SHEET:

Federal Legislation: Local Wellness Policy Law (Public Law 108-265, Section 204) pg. 15
Use to inform team members or others in the school community.

POWERPOINT® PRESENTATION:

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Inform your school community. Let families, students, staff and the community know about the wellness policy and the implementation efforts. Each year provide updates to your school community.

TIPS

- *Present the wellness policy implementation overview and plan to key groups within your school/district (staff, PTA, site council, etc.).*
- *Use existing communications such as the school/district newsletter, student newspaper, website, etc.*
- *Continuously recruit supporters.*
- *Invite comment and feedback.*

TOOLS to inform your school community

WORKSHEET:

Communication planning pgs. 23-24
Use to identify and plan communications to support implementation at every step in the process. See *Tips for Effective Communication* on pg. 69 for suggestions.

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Microsoft® Word versions of these tools can be downloaded from <http://education.state.mn.us>.

Your Notes

Here are some questions to consider. Jot down your ideas and plans here.

Who will be the school administrator to oversee and support the wellness policy implementation plans?

What existing group or team could provide leadership for the wellness policy implementation?

Do we need additional members? If so, who?

Should we form a new wellness policy implementation team? If so, who should be recruited as members?

How can we involve students?

Who might be the team leader or champion for our group?

When should we convene the group? How often should we meet? What information and tools do we need?

What do we need to communicate at this point? What methods should we use? What are our key messages?

When? To whom?

WELLNESS POLICY IMPLEMENTATION TEAM: Job Description

The team charged with wellness policy implementation may be an existing committee in the district or school (such as a school health council) or it may be a new team created specifically for this purpose.

Team leadership

- School administrator with responsibility for policy implementation
- “Champion” – a team leader with the leadership and organizational skills and a passion for improving student wellness

Representation

Because wellness affects the entire school community, the team should strive for representation from a cross-section of the school community. Include staff with expertise in wellness-related topics and in those areas that will be directly affected.

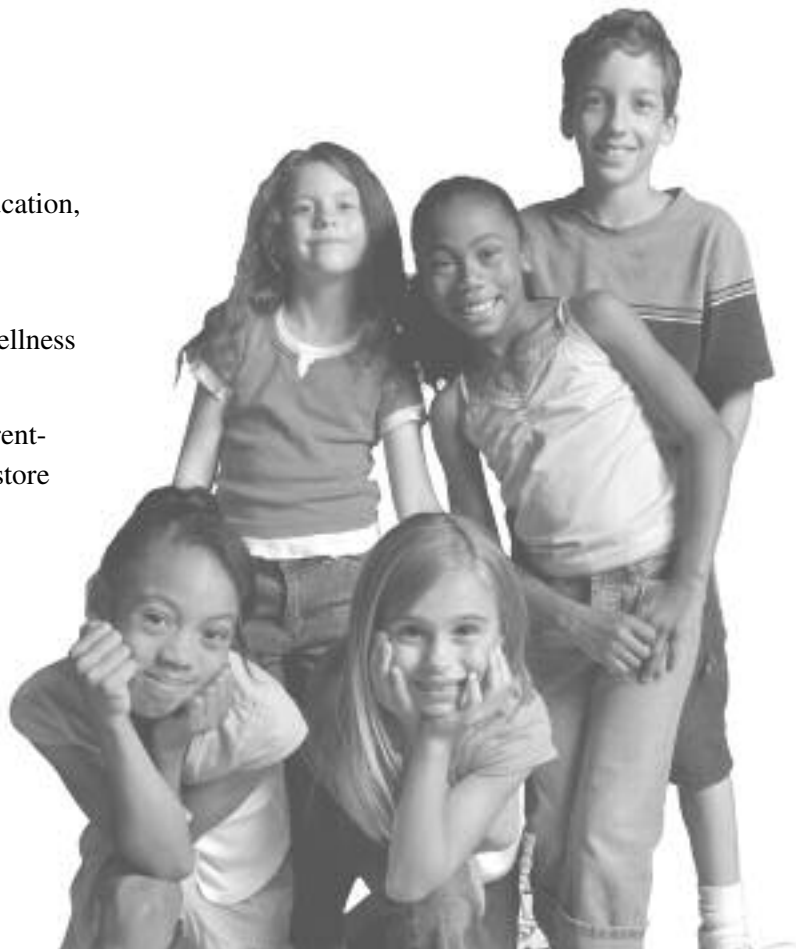
For example:

- Administrators
- Curriculum leaders
- School nurse
- Teachers: elementary, health and physical education, family and consumer sciences
- Food service director/manager
- Parents with skills or interests in health and wellness
- Representatives of student groups
- Representatives of the school site council, parent-teacher organization, student council, school store sponsors and other school-wide groups.
- School board members
- Students
- Community members, such as representatives of local health agencies
- Individual responsible for handling communications to the school community

Responsibilities

The team’s responsibilities include:

- Providing overall leadership for the wellness policy implementation and promoting a school climate that supports and understands the importance of the wellness;
- Assessing the current school environment, as needed, in the areas covered by the wellness policy;
- Developing a comprehensive action plan that addresses policy components and assures measurement of implementation objectives;
- Evaluating the progress of policy implementation;
- Communicating with the school community about the changes being made and reporting on progress; and
- Updating and revising the action plan.



WELLNESS POLICY IMPLEMENTATION TEAM:

Checklist and Roster

Do we have the following representation on our team?

- ☐ School administrator with responsibility for policy implementation
- ☐ Wellness “champion” or team leader to facilitate committee activities
- ☐ Staff from key policy content areas (health, nutrition, physical education and school food service)
- ☐ Members of school-wide groups (site council, parent-teacher organization, student council)
- ☐ Parents, students, community members
- ☐ Member responsible for preparing communications to the school community

Team Roster

- ☐ School administrator (*name*) _____
Phone _____ *Email* _____
- ☐ Wellness policy committee team leader (*name*) _____
Phone _____ *Email* _____
- ☐ Curriculum director (*name*) _____
Phone _____ *Email* _____
- ☐ School food service director/manager (*name/s*) _____
Phone _____ *Email* _____
- ☐ School nurse (*name*) _____
Phone _____ *Email* _____
- ☐ Physical education staff (*name/s*) _____
Phone _____ *Email* _____
- ☐ Health education staff (*name/s*) _____
Phone _____ *Email* _____
- ☐ Family and consumer sciences staff (*name/s*) _____
Phone _____ *Email* _____
- ☐ Elementary teacher (*name/s*) _____
Phone _____ *Email* _____
- ☐ Parents (*name/s*) _____
Phone _____ *Email* _____
- ☐ Students (*name/s*) _____
Phone _____ *Email* _____
- ☐ Community members (*name/s*) _____
Phone _____ *Email* _____
- ☐ Others (*name/s*) _____
Phone _____ *Email* _____

The Link Between Student Health and Achievement

Nutrition and physical activity directly affect academic achievement. Children who eat well and are physically active learn better, while poorly nourished and sedentary children tend to have weaker academic performance and score lower on standardized achievement tests. When children's basic nutritional and fitness needs are met, they are able to learn and achieve. Schools continue to be a primary place for students to learn and practice healthy eating and physical activity habits.

- Research shows that nutrition and physical activity are directly linked to academic achievement.¹
- Poor nutrition and hunger interfere with cognitive function and are associated with lower academic achievement in underweight, normal weight and overweight children.^{2, 3}
- Emerging research suggests that lower academic achievement is associated with being overweight.^{4, 5, 6, 7}
- Participation in breakfast programs is associated with increased academic test scores, improved daily attendance, better class participation and reduced tardiness.^{8, 9}
- Numerous studies have shown that regular physical activity supports better learning. Student fitness levels have been correlated with academic achievement, including improved math, reading and writing scores.^{10, 11, 12}

- Research suggests that decreasing physical education may undermine the goal of better performance, while adding time for physical activity may support improved academic performance.¹³

The problem of childhood obesity

- The prevalence of overweight among children aged 6-11 years has more than doubled in the past 20 years and among adolescents aged 12-19 has more than tripled.^{14, 15}
- Overweight and obesity, influenced by poor diet and inactivity, are significantly associated with an increased risk of diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, asthma, joint problems and poor health status.¹⁶
- Type 2 diabetes, formerly known as adult onset diabetes, has become increasingly prevalent among children and adolescents as rates of overweight and obesity rise.¹⁷
- Overweight children and adolescents are more likely to become overweight or obese adults; one study showed that children who became overweight by age eight were more severely obese as adults.^{18, 19}

Footnotes are on the next page.

2007

The Link Between Student Health and Achievement

Footnotes

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<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/nutrition/facts.html>

FEDERAL LEGISLATION: Local Wellness Policy Law

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265), passed by the U.S. Congress and signed into law by the President, established a new provision requiring districts/schools participating in the federally funded school meal programs to develop and implement a local wellness policy by the beginning of the 2006 school year.

Congress, concerned about the growing problem of childhood obesity and health problems associated with poor nutrition and a lack of physical activity, enacted this legislation because they identified schools as playing a critical role in promoting school health, preventing childhood obesity and preventing diet-related chronic diseases. The law requires wellness policies to be locally developed to address local concerns and priorities.

**Section 204 of Public Law 108-265,
June 30, 2004
Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act**

Section 204 Local Wellness Policy

(a) IN GENERAL – Not later than the first day of the school year beginning after June 30, 2006, each local educational agency participating in a program authorized by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 175 et seq.) or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq.) shall establish a local school wellness policy for schools under the local educational agency that, at a minimum –

1. Includes goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that are designed to promote student wellness in a manner that the local education agency determines is appropriate;
2. Includes nutrition guidelines selected by the local educational agency for all foods available on each school campus under the local educational agency during the school day with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity;
3. Provides an assurance that guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of section 10 of the Child Nutrition Act (42 U.S.C. 1779) and sections 9(f)(1) and 17(a) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1758(f)(1), 1766(a)), as those regulations apply to schools;
4. Establishes a plan for measuring implementation of the local wellness policy, including designation of one or more persons within the local educational agency or at each school, as appropriate, charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the local wellness policy; and
5. Involves parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators and the public in the development of the school wellness policy.

POWERPOINT® PRESENTATION: Wellness Policy Implementation Overview

SLIDE 1



Key Talking Points

Our school is about to embark on an important task – implementing our district’s wellness policy. The goal is to improve our students’ health and achievement. In this brief presentation, I will share with you some background about why we have a wellness policy. Then we’ll review the steps we will follow to implement it.

NOTE: If you are presenting about continuing efforts in subsequent years, you may choose to start with...

Our school is continuing to focus on our wellness policy to improve the health and wellness of students in our school (or district).

The presentation can be downloaded from <http://education.state.mn.us>. Click on Food and Nutrition Service, then click on Health and Wellness. The slides can be printed as handouts. Presentation talking points are included on the note pages.

SLIDE 2



Key Talking Points


- The Local Wellness Policy Law was passed by Congress and became law in 2004 under the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act.
- This law required schools that participate in federal school nutrition programs to develop a Local Wellness Policy. Each school was to have a policy in place by the beginning of school year 2006-07. The policy must address the following components of the law:
 - Nutrition education
 - Physical activity
 - Other school-based activities
 - Nutrition guidelines for foods available during the school day on each school campus
 - Assurance that reimbursable school meals meet the federal standards
- The law also requires that schools establish a plan for measuring implementation of their local wellness policy and designate one or more persons to be responsible for implementation.
- This law was enacted because Congress was concerned about the growing problem of childhood obesity and related health problems.

POWERPOINT® PRESENTATION: Wellness Policy Implementation Overview

SLIDE 3

Rationale for Local Wellness Policies

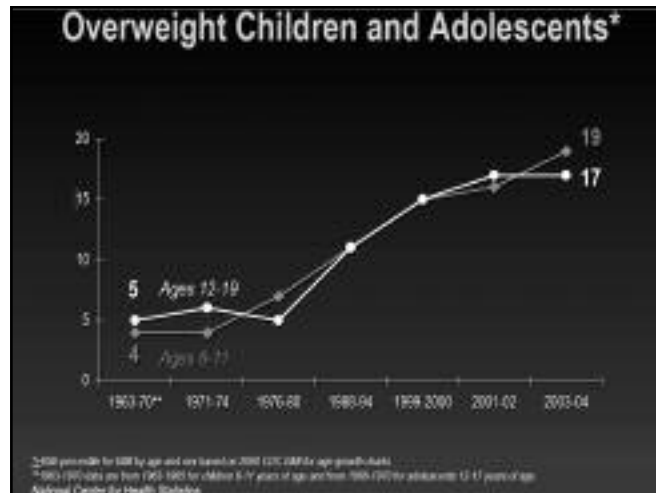
- Increase in overweight children
- Decrease in physical activity
- Implications of health trends
- Impact on student achievement



Key Talking Points

- The statistics are staggering about the prevalence of overweight children in the United States.
 - Over the last 20 years (1980 -2002), the obesity prevalence has doubled in adults ages 20 years and over.
 - In children and adolescents ages 12-19 years over the last 30 years, the overweight prevalence tripled and for children in the age range from 6-11, the obesity rate has quadrupled.
- Although the problem is multi-faceted, one factor of this overweight crisis is the decrease in children's physical activity at school and at home. Another factor is our eating patterns.
- There are long-term health implications: increasing numbers of children are being diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes. This is a chronic health disease that was previously only seen in adults.
- And there is an impact on learning. Studies show a connection between children's health status and academic achievement. Children need to be healthy to learn.
- Bottom line: Good nutrition and adequate physical activity can help...
 - Improve attention span and increase concentration
 - Improve learning
 - Improve attendance and reduce school tardiness
 - Improve behavior

SLIDE 4

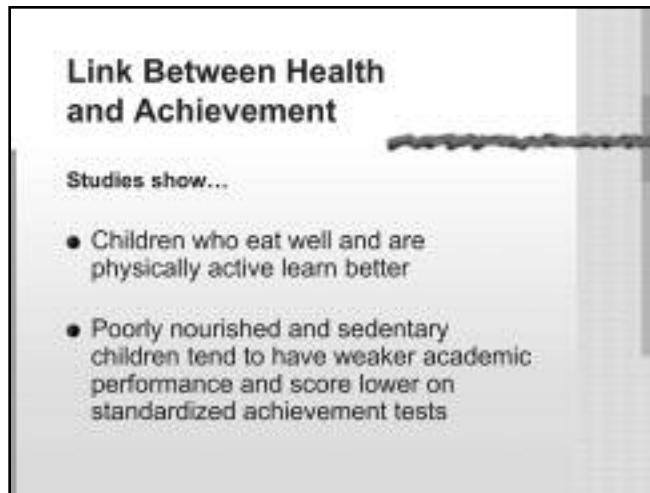


Key Talking Points

- These data are from the National Center for Health Statistics. They show the percent of children that are overweight. Overweight is defined as > 95th percentile for BMI (body mass index) by age and sex based on the 2000 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) BMI for age growth charts.
- You can see that the prevalence of overweight children ages 6-11 years has quadrupled.
- And, the prevalence of overweight children ages 12-19 has tripled.

POWERPOINT® PRESENTATION: Wellness Policy Implementation Overview

SLIDE 5



Key Talking Points

- Research indicates that nutrition and physical activity are linked to academic achievement.
- For example, participation in school breakfast programs is associated with increased academic test scores, improved daily attendance, better class participation and reduced tardiness.
- Student fitness levels have been correlated with academic achievement, including improved math, reading and writing scores.

SLIDE 6



Key Talking Points

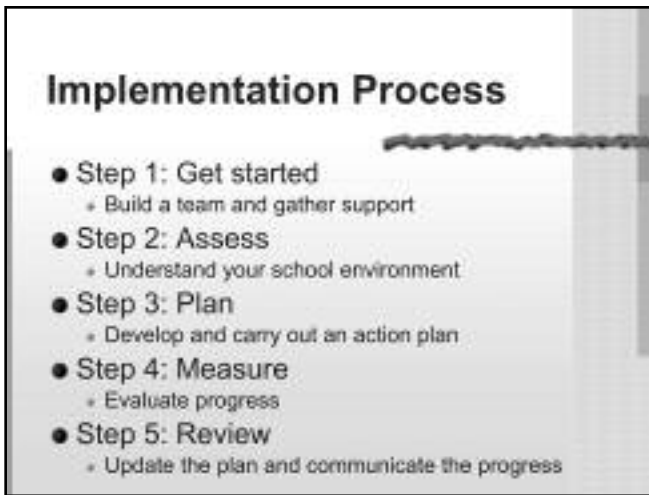
So what does the law require? School wellness policies must include:

- **Goals** for:
 - Nutrition education
 - Physical activity
 - Other school-based activities
- **Guidelines** for all foods available during the school day on each school campus. Some schools have established guidelines for:
 - Vending
 - A la Carte
 - Fund-raising
 - Classroom celebrations
- **Assurances** that reimbursable school meals meet federal requirements.
- **A plan** for measuring the implementation of the policy and one or more persons designated to oversee the implementation.
- **Involvement** of the school and community in the development of the policy— parents, school administrators, school board members, students, community members, school food service.

The law did not specify content. The content is a local decision.

POWERPOINT® PRESENTATION: Wellness Policy Implementation Overview

SLIDE 7



Implementation Process

- Step 1: Get started
 - Build a team and gather support
- Step 2: Assess
 - Understand your school environment
- Step 3: Plan
 - Develop and carry out an action plan
- Step 4: Measure
 - Evaluate progress
- Step 5: Review
 - Update the plan and communicate the progress

Key Talking Points

- Our (district or school) adopted a wellness policy (date). *(If available, distribute a copy of the policy.)*
- How do we go about implementing the policy?
- Here are the suggested steps:
 - Step 1: Get started
 - Step 2: Assess
 - Step 3: Plan
 - Step 4: Measure
 - Step 5: Review

SLIDE 8



Step 1: Get started

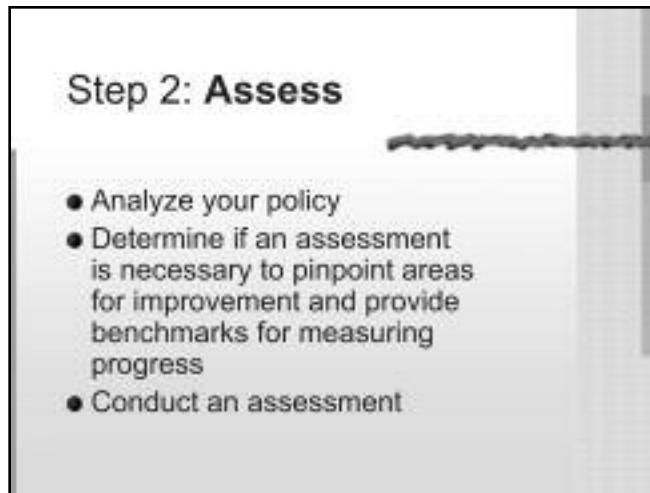
- Identify a leadership group
 - Existing school health team
 - Or, form a new group
 - Recruit members from health, food service, etc.
- Identify a school administrator
- Select a wellness "champion"
 - Leads team, has passion for wellness
- Inform school community
 - Build awareness and support

Key Talking Points

- To get started, we need leadership.
- A team from our school (parents, students, teachers and community members) has been (or will be) designated, including representatives from food service, health education, physical education, school nurses and others. Also, we will identify a school administrator and a team leader or "champion."
- At the outset and throughout the process, we will engage and inform the school community. This is a team effort!
 - Families play an important role at home.
 - Staff are role models.

POWERPOINT® PRESENTATION: Wellness Policy Implementation Overview

SLIDE 9



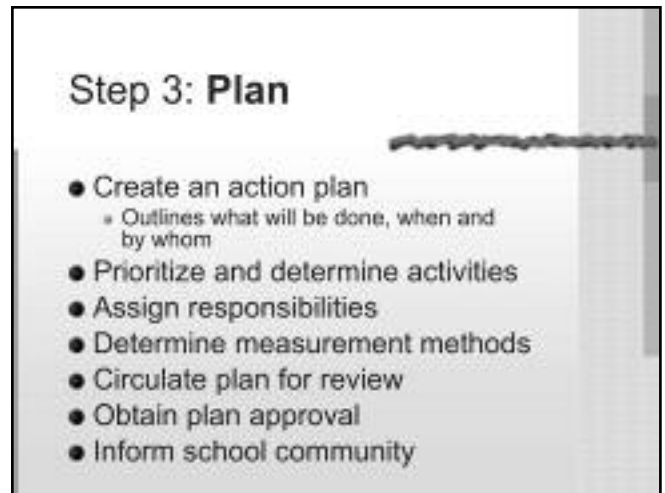
Key Talking Points

- Once our leadership team is in place, we will move to assessment.
- The first step is to analyze the policy itself. Is it clear what specific outcomes or improvements are desired? This is the opportunity to identify what changes are to be made.

For example, our policy could address the types of food and beverages provided in these school settings:

- Vending, snack bars, school stores, concession stands
 - A la carte sales in food service programs
 - Fundraising
 - Classroom celebrations
- At this stage, we may want to use assessment tools, such as the School Health Index, to help us pinpoint areas for improvement. An assessment provides direction for action plans and benchmarks by which we can measure our progress.

SLIDE 10

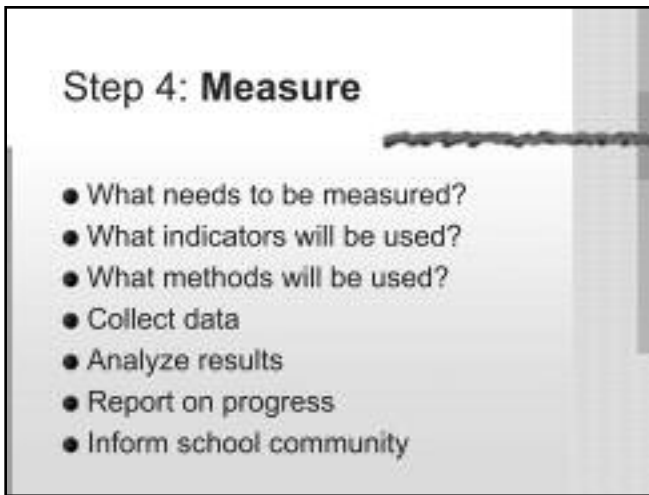


Key Talking Points

- Creating our action plan is the next step. This involves...
 - Prioritizing what we will do first, second and so on. We don't need to accomplish everything at once. We can select a few activities that we can build on.
 - Assigning responsibility and setting timelines.
- At this point we also need to determine what methods we will use to measure change. These can be very simple, such as surveys, or more complex, such as focus groups.
- To ensure success, the support of our school community is critical. We need to regularly communicate with students, families, staff and the community about the importance of the wellness policy implementation.

POWERPOINT® PRESENTATION: Wellness Policy Implementation Overview

SLIDE 11



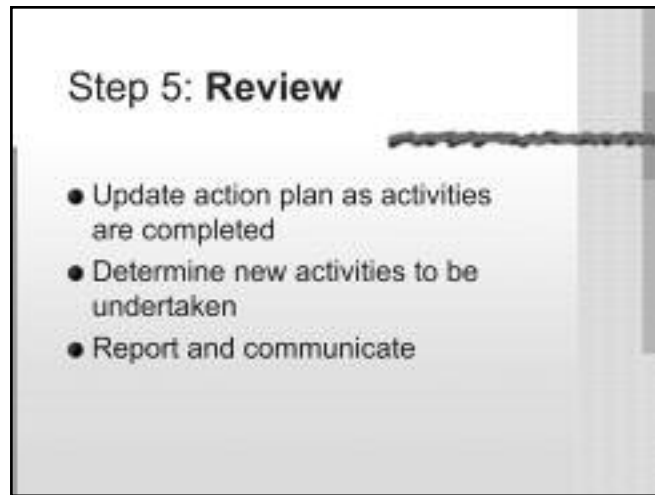
Step 4: Measure

- What needs to be measured?
- What indicators will be used?
- What methods will be used?
- Collect data
- Analyze results
- Report on progress
- Inform school community

Key Talking Points

- The law calls for establishing a plan for measuring implementation and assigning a person or persons responsible for seeing that the plan is implemented.
- This is the evaluation component. Measuring the implementation or actions taken will help us determine if the changes are working. Assigning responsibility assures that evaluation and monitoring will occur.
- In the plan for measuring implementation, we will need to identify who is responsible for implementation, how the policy will be measured, the frequency of the measurement and how the measurement results will be reported.
- By measuring our progress, we can ensure that wellness is becoming part of our school environment and culture.

SLIDE 12



Step 5: Review

- Update action plan as activities are completed
- Determine new activities to be undertaken
- Report and communicate

Key Talking Points

- Our goal is to make wellness an ongoing, year-round priority for our school.
- Just as we review curriculum and the other practices at our school, we want to continue to look for ways to create a healthy environment for our students.
- In this way, wellness will become part of our school environment and culture.

Communication Planning Worksheet

This sample shows how this worksheet might be used at the outset of each school year.

A blank worksheet follows to copy for your use.

S A M P L E

Communication Objective	Key Messages/ Content	Stakeholder Audience(s)	Method(s) to Reach Stakeholders	Timeline
School-wide awareness that this effort is getting started or is continuing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announce launch of wellness policy implementation or the focus for each new school year • Rationale for policy • Members of committee • General timeframe of activities that will be implemented 	Parents School staff	School website School newsletter School handbook	Early September
Parent support and understanding of the rationale for the wellness policy	Importance of good nutrition and physical activity for children Contribution of school breakfast and school lunch Coming soon – changes aimed at improving children’s health Review of policy components, implementation process, seek feedback, etc.	Parents	Letter Handout at open house/ host booth	Late September October
Staff support and understanding of the rationale for the wellness policy	Same as above	School staff	Presentation at staff meeting Memo	First staff meeting of the year

Communication Planning Worksheet

COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVE	KEY MESSAGES/ CONTENT	STAKEHOLDER AUDIENCE(S)	METHOD(S) TO REACH STAKEHOLDERS	TIMELINE

Sample Letter to Parents/Families

Dear Parents,

Did you know that children who are active and eat right are more likely to do better in school, feel good about themselves and live longer? It's true.

We are working to create a healthier environment for our students. The *(name of school)* Wellness Policy Team encourages you to support our school wellness policy implementation. We are considering a variety of ways to offer healthy food choices throughout our school – in the school meal programs, vending machines, classroom celebrations and at school-sponsored events. We are also supporting nutrition education and physical activity. As these changes are introduced, we will keep you informed.

Our team meets monthly and we welcome anyone with an interest in student health to attend. Please stop by the Wellness booth at the School Open House on *(date)* to learn more.

In the meantime, you can help your children lead the healthiest lives possible by reinforcing healthy habits at home.

(Note: This is a great opportunity to send wellness information to families. Resources from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) can be downloaded at: <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/kids-pyramid.html> (for 6-11 year olds) <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/nutritionessentials.html> (for teens) Also, see the Resources section (pg. 71) for other links.)

If you have questions or comments, please feel free to call me at *(phone number)* or send an email to *(email address)*.

Sincerely,

(name)

Principal or other school administrator in charge of the wellness policy

Sample Article for School Newsletter and Website

We're getting healthier!

It's a fact – healthier students are better learners. That's why our school is launching a school-wide wellness initiative to make *(name of school)* a healthier environment for everyone. We're part of a movement across Minnesota and the nation to make our schools healthier places to learn and work.

Our Wellness Policy Team, chaired by *(name)*, is in charge of implementing our school's wellness policy. The wellness policy addresses school meal programs, nutrition education, physical activity and foods available during the school day. We are providing more nutritious yet tasty food options so that students can choose healthier foods for their meals and snacks. We are also increasing opportunities for physical activity.

Members of the Wellness Policy Team include: *(names and titles)*. The committee meets monthly and anyone with an interest in student health is invited to attend. The next meeting will be held *(date/time)* at *(location)*. For more information, call *(name)* *(phone)*.

Watch the school newsletter and website for regular updates from the Wellness Policy Team. Creating a healthier school environment is a team effort, we invite you to join us.

Sample Memo to School Staff

To: All school staff
From: *(Administrator)*
Subject: Wellness Policy Implementation

I'm very pleased to announce the formation of our school Wellness Policy Team, chaired by *(name/title)*. The team is charged with leading the implementation of our school wellness policy, which addresses school meals, nutrition education, physical activity and all foods available at school. The team will be recommending ways to provide nutritious yet tasty food options so that students and staff can choose healthier foods for their meals and snacks. We are also looking at ways to increase opportunities for physical activity. Studies have demonstrated that a program of regular physical activity results in a reduction in disruptive behaviors in the classroom and an increase in students' time on task.

Congress passed legislation in 2004 requiring all schools that participate in federal child nutrition programs to develop local wellness policies and have them in place by the beginning of the 2006-07 school year. Our school board adopted the district wellness policy on *(date)*, and now it's time to implement it.

Our wellness policy is a very positive and exciting step for our school. Studies show a direct connection between a child's health status and academic achievement. The fact is, many children in our society have poor eating habits and don't get enough exercise. Obesity rates have skyrocketed in recent years, along with increases in Type 2 diabetes and other chronic diseases. By improving our school's health environment and practices, we will be improving our students' health and achievement.

Wellness is a team effort involving everyone in our school community. I encourage you to support and get involved in the implementation activities of our wellness policy.

Other members of the Wellness Policy Team include: *(names and titles)*. The team meets monthly and you are invited to attend. The next meeting will be held *(date/time)* at *(location)*. For more information, call *(name)* *(phone)*.

We will have regular reports from the Wellness Policy Team at staff meetings. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Understand your school environment



Identifying your starting point is essential to reaching your goal.

Analyze your policy. Review your policy goals and analyze the level of detail within each goal area. Does the policy address each of the goal areas specified in the law or are goal areas missing? If your policy is written in general terms, are there clear objectives or administrative procedures that provide direction for implementation?

Develop objectives for the policy goals.

The district or school policy may or may not include objectives or specific actions to be taken. An objective is the specific outcome you want to achieve.

TIP

- *The Analyzing Your Policy Worksheet (pg. 32) is designed to help your team understand your policy and identify the actions to be taken for implementation.*

Determine whether an assessment is needed or has been completed. An initial school assessment is valuable because it provides baseline data for measuring your progress and pinpoints gaps and areas for improvement. In many cases, school districts conducted assessments as the basis for their policy development.



TIPS

- *If an assessment was done during the policy development, have the results been aligned to policy goals and objectives? Share the results with your team. The assessment results provide the benchmarks – starting points– that can be used to measure progress.*
- *If an assessment has not been done, consider using the School Health Index (see School Health Index fact sheet on pg. 33) to determine where your school stands today in the key policy areas – health and physical education, nutrition services and school environment. Continue to use it periodically to see how you are doing.*

Inform your school community.

Provide regular updates and progress reports.
Share assessment results.

TOOLS to understand your school environment

WORKSHEET:

Analyzing Your Wellness Policy pgs. 31-32
Use to determine if additional detail is necessary before preparing an implementation action plan.

Microsoft® Word version of this tool can be downloaded from <http://education.state.mn.us>.

FACT SHEET:

School Health Index pg. 33
Learn more about this assessment tool, available from the Centers for Disease Control at www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth.

WORKSHEET:

Communication Planning pgs. 23-24

Understand your school environment (continued)

Your Notes

Here are some questions to consider. Jot down your ideas and plans here.

Is our wellness policy clear about what action or changes are expected?

Do we need to write objectives for each goal area?

Do we need to conduct an assessment to determine the current status in the goal areas?

What baseline data/benchmarks do we already have? Should we use the School Health Index assessment?

What additional information do we need to measure our progress?

What are our key messages to the school community?

Analyzing Your Wellness Policy Worksheet

Instructions:

1. Review your policy.
2. On the worksheet, check yes or no if goal areas are addressed.
3. Check yes or no if there are clear objectives or administrative procedures.
4. If there are no objectives, write objectives for implementation. See chart below for ideas. If there are objectives, transfer the objectives to the worksheet.
5. Check if the objectives will be implemented at the district level, school level or both.
6. Check whether the objectives are in place, partially in place or not in place.
7. Indicate the timeline for implementing each objective.

POLICY GOALS AREAS	SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR OBJECTIVES
Nutrition education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition education instruction by grade • Nutrition education integrated into a variety of subject areas • Nutrition information integrated into the cafeteria and other areas in the school
Physical activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical education instruction by grade • Physical activity integrated into a variety of subject areas • Recess • Intramurals • Walking clubs or other activity clubs
Other school-based activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before and after school activities • Adequate time for lunch and breakfast
Nutrition guidelines for foods available during the school day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A la carte • Vending • Classroom celebrations • School fundraisers • Use of food as rewards • School stores/concessions
Guidelines for school meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure school meals meet federal standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - breakfast - lunch - after-school snack

Analyzing Your Policy Goal Worksheet

POLICY GOAL AREAS	Is this goal area addressed?		If yes, does the policy provide clear objectives		Objectives	Implementation of objectives		Current status			Timeline
	YES	NO	YES	NO		District Level	School Level	In Place	Partially	Not In Place	
Nutrition education											
Physical activity											
Other school-based activities											
Nutrition guidelines for foods available during the school day											
Guidelines for school meals											

SELF-ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING GUIDE

School Health Index

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed the School Health Index, a self-assessment and planning tool, to help schools:

- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of your school's health promotion policies and programs;
- Develop an action plan for improving student health; and
- Involve teachers, parents, students and the community in improving school services.

A team made up of members of different groups within the school – parents, teachers, students, administrators and other staff – and concerned community members is responsible for completing a questionnaire in each module. Responses to each questionnaire are scored to help identify your school's strengths and weaknesses. The School Health Index also includes a Planning for Improvement section that helps schools use their Index scores to develop an action plan for each module and for the school as a whole.

The eight School Health Index assessment modules include:

1. School Health and Safety Policies and Environment
2. Health Education
3. Physical Education and Other Physical Activity Programs
4. Nutrition Services
5. School Health Services
6. School Counseling, Psychological and Social Services
7. Health Promotion for Staff
8. Family and Community Involvement

Of the eight modules, each corresponding to a component of a coordinated school health program, four of the assessment modules will be helpful for local wellness policy implementation.

- Health education
- Physical education
- Nutrition services
- School Health and Safety Policies and Environment

To obtain a copy of the School Health Index, available at no cost, choose one of the following options:

- Download from the CDC websites:
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash or
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa or
www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth
- Request by email: cdcinfo@cdc.gov
- Call the CDC Division of Adolescent and School Health Resource Room: 770-488-3168
- Request by toll-free fax: 888-282-7681



STEP **3** PLAN

*Develop your action plan
and carry it out*



Your action plan is your roadmap for change.

Create a plan. In your plan include specific action steps to accomplish each objective in each goal area. Describe what, when and who will implement the actions.

TIPS

- *The wellness policy implementation team is responsible for developing the action plan. How you do this will depend on your policy and whether the activities will be implemented at the district or school level. The Developing Your Action Plan Worksheets (pgs. 37-41) are designed to assist you in this task.*
 - *For single schools or small districts, a single district-wide committee may choose to complete the planning worksheets.*
 - *For a multi-site school district, you might have an implementation plan for district level actions and each school building might have its own plan.*
- *Consider implementation in phases over a period of several years.*

Evaluate what additional resources,

if any, will be needed for each action step and their availability. Seek resources as necessary.

Prioritize. Given available resources and the school calendar, determine the timeline for implementing each objective.

Assign responsibilities. Determine who will do what.

Include measurement methods. Determine how each objective will be measured. Determine the measurement method and tool to use to obtain the desired data.

TIP

- *Use the Measurement Planning Worksheets (pgs. 45-49) and Steps to Measuring Change (pg. 53) to help determine methods and tools to measure change.*

Invite comments on the action plan.

Have your plan reviewed by others. Ask who would like to assist in carrying out the plan.

TIP

- *Circulate the implementation plan through district/school channels. Ask for comments, suggestions and/or approval from:*
 - *School/district administration*
 - *School board*
 - *Site council, PTA*
 - *School staff*
 - *Student council*
 - *Community advisors*

Inform your school community about what changes are coming. It is essential to keep all groups within the school/district community informed.

TIP

- *Select the most appropriate school/district communication vehicles.*
 - *School newsletter*
 - *School website*
 - *Letters to families*
 - *Memo or presentation at school staff meetings*

TOOLS for creating your action plan

WORKSHEETS:

Developing Your Action Plan pgs. 37-41
Use to develop an action plan for each of the goal areas. The worksheets can be used for district or school level plans.

Microsoft® Word versions of these tools can be downloaded from <http://education.state.mn.us>.

WORKSHEET:

Communication Planning pgs. 23-24

Your Notes

Here are some questions to consider. Jot down your ideas and plans here.

What is the most efficient and effective way to develop our action plan?
Should we develop it as a team or assign goal areas to sub-committees?

When will we do this? At a regular team meeting? At a retreat session?

Who needs to review and approve the action plan?

How can we best present the action plan for approval? Have a meeting? Create a presentation?

What key messages do we want to communicate to the school community?

DEVELOPING YOUR ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET:
Nutrition Education

OBJECTIVE What do we want to accomplish?	ACTION STEPS What activities need to happen?	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE Start and completion dates	MEASUREMENT How will progress be measured?	STAKEHOLDERS Who needs to be involved?	COMMUNICATIONS How will we get the word out?

DEVELOPING YOUR ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET: Physical Activity

OBJECTIVE What do we want to accomplish?	ACTION STEPS What activities need to happen?	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE Start and completion dates	MEASUREMENT How will progress be measured?	STAKEHOLDERS Who needs to be involved?	COMMUNICATIONS How will we get the word out?

DEVELOPING YOUR ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET:
Other School-Based Activities

OBJECTIVE What do we want to accomplish?	ACTION STEPS What activities need to happen?	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE Start and completion dates	MEASUREMENT How will progress be measured?	STAKEHOLDERS Who needs to be involved?	COMMUNICATIONS How will we get the word out?

DEVELOPING YOUR ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET:

Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available During the School Day

OBJECTIVE What do we want to accomplish?	ACTION STEPS What activities need to happen?	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE Start and completion dates	MEASUREMENT How will progress be measured?	STAKEHOLDERS Who needs to be involved?	COMMUNICATIONS How will we get the word out?

A Microsoft® Word version can be downloaded from <http://education.state.mn.us>. Click on Food and Nutrition Service, then click on Health and Wellness.

DEVELOPING YOUR ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET:
Guidelines for School Meals

OBJECTIVE What do we want to accomplish?	ACTION STEPS What activities need to happen?	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE Start and completion dates	MEASUREMENT How will progress be measured?	STAKEHOLDERS Who needs to be involved?	COMMUNICATIONS How will we get the word out?

STEP 4 MEASURE

Evaluate
your progress



The best way to know if a policy is working is to measure it.

Determine what needs to be measured

and what indicators will be used. Determine the measurement method and tool to use to obtain the desired data.

TIP

- *The Measurement Planning Worksheets (pgs. 45-49) can assist you in this step. Also, see Steps to Measuring Change (pg. 53) for more information on how to measure progress.*

Collect measurement data.

TIPS

- *Assign team members to collect data and report back to the wellness policy implementation team.*
- *Review and evaluate the data and summarize the conclusions in a report.*

Report to stakeholders.

Determine who needs to know the results and accomplishments.

Inform the school community.

Celebrate the successes. Recognize the efforts of those involved.

TIPS

- *Develop ways to acknowledge accomplishments.*
- *Report to the school board, site council and other key groups.*

TOOLS to evaluate your progress

WORKSHEETS:

Measurement Planning pgs. 45-49

Use these worksheets to plan how you will measure the progress of your wellness policy implementation. Review *Steps to Measuring Change* (pg. 53) for ideas and guidance.

Microsoft® Word versions of these tools can be downloaded from <http://education.state.mn.us>.

WORKSHEET:

Communication Planning pgs. 23-24



Your Notes

Here are some questions to consider. Jot down your ideas and plans here.

What do we want to measure? What indicators should be used?

What measurement methods and tools make the most sense for our situation?

Who will be responsible for developing the measurement tools and administering them?

Who will collect the data?

How often will our team review data?

How will we communicate the results?

How will we celebrate our successes? How will we recognize the contributions of those involved?

MEASUREMENT PLANNING WORKSHEET:

Nutrition Education

OBJECTIVE What do we want to accomplish?	INDICATOR What markers will show that change occurred?	MEASUREMENT TOOL How will we document change?	PERSON RESPONSIBLE Who will do the measuring?	TIMELINE Start and end dates

MEASUREMENT PLANNING WORKSHEET:

Physical Activity

OBJECTIVE What do we want to accomplish?	INDICATOR What markers will show that change occurred?	MEASUREMENT TOOL How will we document change?	PERSON RESPONSIBLE Who will do the measuring?	TIMELINE Start and end dates

MEASUREMENT PLANNING WORKSHEET: Other School-Based Activities

OBJECTIVE What do we want to accomplish?	INDICATOR What markers will show that change occurred?	MEASUREMENT TOOL How will we document change?	PERSON RESPONSIBLE Who will do the measuring?	TIMELINE Start and end dates

MEASUREMENT PLANNING WORKSHEET:

Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available During the School Day

OBJECTIVE What do we want to accomplish?	INDICATOR What markers will show that change occurred?	MEASUREMENT TOOL How will we document change?	PERSON RESPONSIBLE Who will do the measuring?	TIMELINE Start and end dates

A Microsoft® Word version can be downloaded from <http://education.state.mn.us>. Click on Food and Nutrition Service, then click on Health and Wellness.

MEASUREMENT PLANNING WORKSHEET:

Guidelines for School Meals

OBJECTIVE What do we want to accomplish?	INDICATOR What markers will show that change occurred?	MEASUREMENT TOOL How will we document change?	PERSON RESPONSIBLE Who will do the measuring?	TIMELINE Start and end dates

STEP **5** REVIEW

Update the plan



Wellness policy implementation is an ongoing process.

Review and update plan.

As action steps are completed, update the plan.

TIPS

- *As a team, review your wellness policy action plan annually or as needed.*
 - *What has been accomplished? What still needs to be accomplished?*
 - *What new objectives could be added?*
 - *What action steps will be in the next phase?*
 - *Who needs to be involved in the next phase?*
- *Additional members of the wellness policy team may be added depending on what areas of implementation are underway.*

Inform your school community.

Provide regular updates through school communications such as newsletters, flyers and the website.

Celebrate your successes.

As major accomplishments occur, take time to recognize the improvements and the people who have contributed.

TOOLS for review and update

WORKSHEET:

Developing Your Action Plan pgs. 37-41

WORKSHEET:

Measurement Planning pgs. 45-49

WORKSHEET:

Communication Planning pgs. 23-24



Your Notes

Here are some questions to consider. Jot down your ideas and plans here.

What are our key accomplishments so far?

What did not work?

What are the next priorities?

Do we need additional team members for the next phase? Who should be invited to join us?

What challenges do we face in the next phase? What resources do we need?

How will we communicate our next steps to the school community?

How will we celebrate our successes? How will we recognize the contributions of those involved?

RESOURCES

Wellness Resources



Steps to Measuring Change

The best way to know if a policy is working is to measure it. *Steps to Measuring Change* is a reference guide that describes the steps in an evaluation process. (A *Steps to Measuring Change Worksheet* is included on pg. 68 that you may find useful. Also see *Measurement Planning Worksheets* beginning on pg. 45.)

Here are the steps in detail:

1. Review goals – Measuring the progress of your wellness policy starts with reviewing your policy goals. Policy goals are usually broad statements that describe a desired outcome.

2. Develop objectives – Objectives are the specific statements of actions to be achieved to meet the goals. Objectives specify the target audience, describe the expected results, include a time frame and are measurable. Review your policy. Does it include administrative procedures, strategies or objectives to be achieved within each goal? If not, develop clear and realistic objectives for each policy goal. The *Analyzing Your Policy Worksheet* (pg. 32) is a tool to assist in this task.

Also, as you are developing objectives, determine if an assessment has been done or is needed. An assessment helps determine what you are doing today. The assessment results can be compared to the desired objectives. An initial school assessment provides baseline data for measuring progress and pinpoints gaps and areas for improvement. Ideally, schools conducted an assessment and used the results to help develop their wellness policy. Refer to the *School Health Index* resource (pg. 33) for assistance with school health assessments.

3. Identify action steps – Action steps are the activities required to achieve the desired objectives. They are included in the wellness policy implementation action plan. (See *Step 3 Plan* pg. 35) The action steps should be clear, realistic and within a school's capabilities.

4. Select indicators – Indicators are the changes you would expect to see as a result of achieving the objectives. Indicators are markers to identify the position, presence or direction of a desired change. The type of indicator selected will vary greatly depending on the goal and objective. An indicator can be qualitative as well as quantitative. Here are some examples of indicators that may change as a result of the implementation of new procedures:

Skills	New partnerships
Time allocation	Knowledge
Satisfaction	Number of activities
Attitude	Consumption
Academic performance	Fitness
Review findings	Income
Lunch-line wait time	Expenditures
Behavior	Profit
Number of people participating	



Steps to Measuring Change (continued)

5. Choose measurement tools – Choose a tool that makes the most sense for the indicator being measured and the intended audience. Tools such as questionnaires, surveys, taste tests, pre/post tests or interviews do not have to be long or involved to result in good information. Here are some examples of measurement tools:

Direct observation	Stopwatch/Timer
Questionnaires	Surveys
Focus groups	Interviews
Taste tests	Recordkeeping
Pre/Post-test	Nutritional analysis

6. Collect the data – Data include the information, statistics, facts and numbers collected with the measurement tool. Determine when and how the data will be collected. Consider timing, location, staffing and convenience. Whenever possible, collect data for the same indicator using the same measurement tool at two different points in time to see if there has been a change. Measurements can be taken:

- Before and/or after an activity/event/project
- At regular intervals throughout the year
- During a session or activity
- Before the school day starts or after it ends

Consider collecting data using direct mail, phone surveys, drop boxes and audio/visual taping. Incentives, however small, tend to increase participation in data collection.

Be creative about gathering information. Utilize teachers, students, parents, public health departments, community events, etc.

7. Analyze the data – Examine the data.

It may reveal that activities need to be changed or that different indicators need to be selected. This information can describe or explain the progress being made toward wellness policy goals. Data showing a lack of progress can be equally helpful in determining reallocation of resources, time or energy. The findings and conclusions can be drawn and reported back to students, teachers, staff, parents, school board or other stakeholders.

8. Communicate the findings – Informing stakeholders is an important component of evaluation. Sharing information can serve to encourage new or continued support of the spirit and intent of the policy. (See *Communications Planning Worksheet*, pg. 24 and *Tips for Effective Communication*, pg. 69.) As you are thinking about the reporting process consider:

- Who would benefit or want to know about the information?
- How should they be informed?
- What will you do with any feedback you might receive?

The following pages present examples of wellness policy goals and how they might be evaluated using these steps.

Nutrition Education

EXAMPLE

Goal:

The school will provide nutrition education and promote healthy eating habits as part of classroom instruction and in the cafeteria.

Objective:

Increase middle school students' knowledge about the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables and their attitudes toward eating fruits and vegetables as measured by pre/post-tests, surveys and taste tests.

Action steps:

1. The school wellness committee will select a message for each quarter about fruits and vegetables for a school-wide campaign.
2. A school-wide campaign highlighting the messages will be developed.
3. Lesson plans pertaining to the messages will be developed for health classes.
4. Teachers will receive training in the lesson plans.
5. The school food service will support the messages by highlighting fruits and vegetables on the menu, offering taste tests in classrooms and promoting the messages on the menu, serving line and with posters in the cafeteria.

Indicator:

The school will track changes in knowledge and attitudes toward the nutrition messages as indicators of success. The school also could choose as indicators changes in behavior and satisfaction.

Measurement tool:

For this wellness policy goal the school decided to use test scores, surveys and taste tests to measure changes in knowledge and attitudes.

Collect the data:

Only students taking health classes will be tested at the beginning of each quarter and again at the end to determine changes in knowledge and attitude. The school will use these scores as a representative sample of the changes occurring school-wide.

Health Class Message: <i>(The importance of increasing fruits/vegetables)</i>	Pre-test Score Average	Post-test Score Average
Second Hour Health Class 1st quarter	65%	91%
Fifth Hour Health Class 1st quarter	68%	90%

Additional data would include survey results and the attitude changes towards adding a new vegetable to the school lunch menu – like zucchini sticks.

Analyze the data:

Based on the increase in the average test scores in both health classes and the positive results of the survey and taste test, the school concludes that the goal of nutrition education and promotion was met in the first quarter of the year.

Communicate the findings:

This information will be disseminated at the next school board meeting and a summary of the results printed in the upcoming school newsletter.

Physical Activity

EXAMPLE

Goal:

To provide all students with physical education instruction and physical activity opportunities during the school day.

Objective:

Increase elementary students' physical activity each day to 30 minutes from a combination of physical education, recess and classroom activities.

Action steps:

1. The school will schedule physical education classes.
2. The school will provide recess for all students.
3. Teachers will be trained on how to integrate physical activity in a variety of subject areas.
4. Physical activity logs will be developed to record physical activity for each classroom.

Indicators:

The school will record:

1. The number of minutes students are physically active.
2. The number of classrooms taking physical activity breaks.
3. Physical education classes offered to all grade levels.
4. Recess offered to all students.

Measurement tool:

A physical activity log will be used to track the time each class spends being physically active and the physical education teacher's schedule will indicate whether all classrooms received physical education instruction and the time for each class period.

Collect the data:

The elementary teachers will record the physical activity in a log prior to requiring the 30 minutes of physical activity daily. The activity logs will be collected and the procedure repeated at mid-year and at the end of the year. The three points of data collection will provide information about the changes that occurred.

Analyze the data:

Based on the increase of physical activity documented by the activity logs and physical education class time, the school concludes that the goal of physical activity was met for the school year.

Communicate the findings:

School personnel, students, school board members and parents will be informed of the results through presentations and newsletters. The results will be included in the wellness policy report to the school board.

Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available During the School Day

EXAMPLE

Goal:

All foods sold or offered to students during the school day will contribute to a balanced, healthy diet and support healthy eating habits.

Objective:

To increase compliance with the school nutrition guidelines for foods offered in the classroom or for sale in school stores, vending machines, a la carte or fundraisers by the end of the school year.

Action Steps:

1. Adopt or develop nutrition guidelines for all foods available during the school day.
2. Communicate the new guidelines to suppliers and review or renegotiate contracts with them.
3. Meet with teachers and parents to develop instructions for foods that can be offered in the classroom.
4. Meet with school organizations that sell food to students or sell food as fundraisers to develop a suggested list of foods or nonfood items.
5. Food service staff will include students in approving new food choices for a la carte.
6. Inform students, staff and parents of the nutrition guidelines.

Indicator:

Initially, the school will track the foods offered or sold during the school day. Six months after instituting the nutrition guidelines, the school will repeat the process to determine if there have been changes.

Measurement tool:

For the initial measurement, teachers will be given a chart to track the foods offered in their classrooms. After six months of implementing the nutrition guidelines, the teachers will again track the foods offered in their classrooms to determine if there have been changes. This will also be done for foods sold in school stores, vending machines and a la carte offerings.

Analyze the data:

Based on the data collected, the school concludes that the majority of the foods available during the school day comply with the nutrition guidelines.

Communicate the findings:

The school will report the findings to the wellness policy committee, teachers at their staff meeting, the student council, parent groups, the school administrators and the school board in the annual wellness policy report to the board.

The following pages present examples of objectives for the Wellness Policy Goal, nutrition guidelines for foods available during the school day and how they might be evaluated.

- A la Carte
- Vending
- Classroom Celebrations
- Food as a Reward
- School Stores and Concessions

Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available During the School Day:

A la Carte

EXAMPLE

Situation:

Studies have shown that students who eat breakfast and lunch at school consume a greater variety of healthy foods and more nutrients. Students consume more vegetables, drink more milk and eat fewer cookies, cakes and salty snacks than students who make other lunch choices. When students replace a healthy school lunch with less nutritious items, they are often consuming inadequate nutrients and excess calories, which can lead to overweight.

Challenge:

Some schools sell a la carte items in the food service area to offer students additional choices and to remain financially solvent in the food service department. Often the decision of what to offer a la carte is influenced by students' preferences for fast food, salty snacks and sweetened beverages. Changing student preferences takes time and education.

Goal:

All foods sold or offered to students during the school day will contribute to a balanced healthy diet and healthy eating habits.

Objective:

A la carte foods that meet the school nutrition guidelines will be available to students in middle school and high school.

Ideas for implementing change:

- Investigate a la carte choices.
- Educate and involve students in the selection of available a la carte choices.
- Consider inviting food service staff into the classroom to talk about healthy a la carte choices.
- Create a dialogue with the supplier so the company is aware of the school's needs.
- Try something new.
- Provide teachers with curricula that incorporates healthy food choice messages.
- Promote healthy portion sizes.

Evaluate/Communicate/Promote:

In order for a la carte policies to be successful, schools must establish a plan for measuring their implementation progress. Documentation, evaluation and feedback are essential in sustaining local wellness policy achievements. Support for the implemented changes rests on communicating the intent, promoting the objective and publicizing the achievements.



Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available During the School Day:

Steps to Evaluating A la Carte

EXAMPLE

1. Assess the situation. Inventory all the foods and beverages currently sold a la carte.

Be sure to include the item, manufacturer, flavor, variety and portion size. Example:

Manufacturer	Item	Flavor Variety	Package Size	Nutrient Content		
				Cal	Fat	Sugar
Healthy Eats	Corn chips	Cheese	1.75 oz	190	9 gm	1 gm
Squeeze	Drink	Grape	8 fl oz	140	0	16 gm
Energize	Sports drink	Punch	20 fl oz	210	0	21 gm

Identify any products that do not align with the intent of the school's nutrition guidelines and the wellness policy goal. Consider calories, portion size and nutrient density.

2. Define success. Consider what changes can be made, where to start and what the situation will look like if successful. Evaluation is easier to measure if success is defined early in the implementation planning process.

3. Develop an objective with action steps. Decide what should be done to improve a la carte choices. Talk to students about a la carte choices; they will have definite opinions. Consider the timing of a change. Changes over the summer may fare better than changes made in the middle of a school year.

4. Select an indicator. An indicator is anything that signals a change in a la carte. An indicator can be a change in the number of a la carte items that meet specified nutrition guidelines as a result of implementing a new policy. The guidelines can be as simple as not offering any item that has sugar among the first three ingredients. Other indicators can include revenues generated, customer satisfaction or an increased consumption of the healthier choices.

5. Choose a measurement tool. A measurement tool is the instrument used to document change. Determine what paperwork is required to track the changes in a la carte choices. A measurement tool should be simple and may be something already in use.

6. Collect the data. Document the indicated changes on the measurement tool. If possible, collect data at two different points in time to compare the effects of implementing the changes.

7. Analyze the data. Look for changes that show successful implementation. Equally important are data that show the implementation plan is not working. Analyzing the data may reveal ways to adjust the implementation process.

8. Communicate the findings. Report the results to your target audiences. Give feedback to those who gave input into the development of the plan, particularly if students were involved. Consider announcing a summary of the findings in newsletters, media releases or school board reports.

Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available During the School Day:

Vending

EXAMPLE

Situation:

Although foods served in the school breakfast and lunch programs must meet federal nutrition guidelines, few rules address other foods available on school grounds such as food sold in vending machines. In past years, up to 80 percent of beverages and snacks sold in vending machines have been chips, candy and sweetened soda.

Challenge:

Over the past few decades, the availability of snack foods high in fat and sugar and an assortment of beverages has increased in schools through vending machines. Some vending contracts have provided cash bonuses or non-cash incentives which schools rely on to fund school programs.

Goal:

All foods sold or offered to students during the school day will contribute to a balanced diet and healthy eating habits.

Objective:

Establish food standards for products sold in vending machines that will increase nutrient density, decrease fats and sugars and moderate portion sizes while minimizing the financial impact to the school.

Ideas for implementing change:

- Educate students about vending machine choices that are healthy.
- Develop or adopt nutrition standards for vending machine foods and beverages.
- Investigate vending options.
- Request an amendment to the current vending machine agreement to align district wellness policy goals with vending machine choices.
- Negotiate vending contracts that support healthy eating such as 100 percent juices, skim milk and bottled water at attractive prices.
- Eliminate or restrict access to foods of minimal nutritional value (hard candy, gum, jellies, etc.).
- Avoid exclusivity clauses that forbid the school from selling competing products.
- On vending machines, replace company logos with images that portray young people being active.

Evaluate/Communicate/Promote:

In order for vending machine policies to be successful, schools must establish a plan for measuring their implementation progress. Documentation, evaluation and feedback are essential in sustaining local wellness policy achievements. Support for the implemented changes rests on communicating the intent, promoting the objective and publicizing the achievements.

Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available During the School Day:

Steps to Evaluating Vending

EXAMPLE

1. Assess the situation. Inventory all the foods and beverages currently sold in vending machines.

Be sure to include the item, manufacturer, flavor, variety, portion size and accessibility to students. *Example:*

Manufacturer	Item	Flavor Variety	Package Size	Nutrient Content			Accessibility
				Cal	Fat	Sugar	
Happy Grains	Cereal mix	Cheese	1.75 oz	180	9 gm	1 gm	All day
Juicy Up	Drink	Grape	8 fl oz	140	0	16 gm	All day
Energize	Cola	Cherry	20 fl oz	210	0	21 gm	All day

Identify any products that do not align with the intent of the school nutrition guidelines or a wellness policy goal. Consider calories, portion size and nutrient density.

2. Define success. Consider what changes can be made, where to start and what the situation will look like if successful. Evaluation is easier to measure if success is defined early in the implementation planning process.

3. Develop an objective and action steps.

Decide what can be done to improve vending machine choices both in the short and long term. Talk to students about vending machine choices; they will have definite opinions. Consider adopting a nutrition standard for vending machine choices and re-negotiating contractual obligations if necessary.

4. Select an indicator. An indicator in this case might be a change in the number of vending items that meet the newly adopted nutrition standards. Keep the standards simple such as rejecting any item that has sugar among the first three ingredients. Other indicators can include revenues generated, customer satisfaction or an increased consumption of the healthier choices.

5. Choose a measurement tool. A measurement tool is the instrument used to document change. Determine what paperwork is required to track the changes in vending machine choices. A measurement tool should be simple and may be something already in use.

6. Collect the data. Document the indicated changes on the measurement tool. If possible, collect data at two different points in time to compare the effects of implementing the changes.

7. Analyze the data. Look for changes that show successful implementation. Equally important are data that show the implementation plan is not working. Analyzing the data may reveal ways to adjust the implementation process.

8. Communicate the findings. Report the results to your target audiences. Give feedback to those who gave input into the development of the plan, particularly if students were involved. Consider announcing a summary of the findings in newsletters, media releases or school board reports.

Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available During the School Day:

Classroom Celebrations

EXAMPLE

Situation:

The attitudes and behaviors of teachers and parents affect the lifestyle choices made by students. Sometimes adults unknowingly send mixed messages to children that celebrations only consist of candy, cookies and ice cream or other foods high in calories and low in nutritional value.

Challenge:

Food is closely associated with the act of celebrating in almost every tradition, culture, religion and social setting. Eliminating food or offering healthier foods not typically associated with the event can be perceived as detrimental to the celebration itself.

Goal:

All foods sold or offered to students during the school day will contribute to a balanced, healthy diet and healthy eating habits.

Objective:

Foods offered during classroom celebrations will comply with the school nutrition guidelines for classroom celebrations.

Ideas for implementing change:

- Educate students about healthy classroom celebrations that do not include food.
- Provide teachers and staff with a list of healthy alternatives.
- Encourage teachers to role model healthy food choices and incorporate messages into the curriculum.
- Consider incorporating an extended recess period or other activity period as a way of celebrating.
- Consider fresh fruits, yogurt dips and fruit juices instead of chips, cookies and soda.
- Develop standards for food used in classroom celebrations.
- Celebrate all the birthdays that occur in a month on one day.
- Promote healthy portion sizes.
- Try something new.
- Consider holding classroom celebrations involving food after lunch.

Evaluate/Communicate/Promote:

In order for a classroom celebration policy to be successful, schools must establish a plan for measuring their implementation progress. Documentation, evaluation and feedback are essential in sustaining local wellness policy achievements. Support for the implemented changes rests on communicating the intent, promoting the objective and publicizing the achievements.

Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available During the School Day:

Steps to Evaluating Foods Used in Classroom Celebrations

EXAMPLE

1. Assess the situation. Determine the types of classroom celebrations, the frequency and the foods served. Identify foods that do not align with the intent of a wellness policy goal.

2. Define success. Consider what changes can be made, where to start and what the situation will look like if successful. Evaluation is easier to measure if success is defined early in the implementation planning process.

3. Develop an objective and action steps. Decide what could be done to improve foods offered during classroom celebrations. Talk to students about classroom celebrations; they will have definite opinions. Consider the timing of a change. Changes over the summer may fare better than changes made in the middle of a school year.

4. Select an evaluation indicator. An indicator is anything that signals a change in classroom celebrations. An indicator can be a change in the number of classroom celebrations and/or the items that meet nutrition standards as a result of implementing a new policy. An indicator can also include student satisfaction.

5. Choose a measurement tool. A measurement tool is the instrument used to document change. Determine what paperwork is required to track the changes in foods offered during classroom celebrations. A measurement tool should be simple and may be something already in use.

6. Collect the data. Document the indicated changes on the measurement tool. If possible, collect data at two different points in time to compare the effects of implementing the change.

7. Analyze the data. Look for changes that show successful implementation. Equally important are data that show the implementation plan is not working. Analyzing the data may reveal ways to adjust the implementation process.

8. Communicate the findings. Report the results to your target audiences. Give feedback to those who gave input into the development of the action plan, particularly if students were involved. Consider announcing a summary of the findings in newsletters, media releases or school board reports.

Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available During the School Day:

Food as a Reward

EXAMPLE

Situation:

Food is commonly used to reward childrens' good behavior or academic performance. Often foods presented to children as a reward are high in sugar or fat with little nutritional value. This practice of rewarding children with food tends to encourage over-consumption of low nutrient-dense foods, undermines sound nutrition education principles, and encourages kids to eat when they are not hungry.

Challenge:

Using food as a reward is an easy, inexpensive and powerful way to reinforce good behavior in the short term. Teachers, parents and the community need to recognize the problem of providing food with empty calories as a reward and consider alternatives that can support healthy eating habits.

Goal:

All foods sold or offered to students during the school day will contribute to a balanced, healthy diet and healthy eating habits.

Objective:

Provide non-food rewards as a way of reinforcing positive behaviors in the school environment.

Ideas for implementing change:

- Educate students about healthy rewards.
- Educate teachers and staff on alternatives to using food as rewards.
- Develop a simple recognition system that will acknowledge good behavior or academics through a collaborative effort between staff, teachers, parents and administrators.
- Consider eliminating or restricting access to foods of minimal nutritional value as a reward.
- Invite parents or businesses in the community to donate incentives such as movie rental coupons, art supplies or gift certificates.
- Try using non-food rewards such as going first, homework passes or helping in another classroom.
- Reward entire classrooms with extra recess minutes, listening to music while working or holding class outdoors.
- Reward individuals with school supplies like special pens, bookmarks or crayons.
- Consider creating a point system where students can earn points towards a pedometer, a book or a school t-shirt.

Evaluate/Communicate/Promote:

In order for non-food reward practices to be successful, schools must establish a plan for measuring their progress. Documentation, evaluation and feedback are essential to sustaining local wellness policy achievements. Support for the implemented changes rests on communicating the intent, promoting the objective and publicizing the achievements.

Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available During the School Day: Steps to Evaluating Food as a Reward

EXAMPLE

1. Assess the situation. Inventory current practices of rewarding students and list them. Identify any practices that do not align with the intent of a wellness policy goal.

2. Define success. Consider what changes can be made, determine a starting point and describe what the situation would look like if successful. Evaluation is easier to measure if success can be defined early in the implementation planning process.

3. Develop an objective and action steps. Decide what can be done to change the way rewards are granted and start with changes that can be made easily. Identify the action steps that will lead to the desired change. Another step might include identifying potential obstacles to the more difficult changes and create solutions such as training, raising awareness or meeting with school staff and organizations. Gather input from those most affected by the change because people are less likely to be resistant to changes if they are involved in making the change.

4. Select an indicator. An indicator is anything that signals a change in the way rewards are granted as a result of implementing new procedures. Indicators can be qualitative as well as quantitative. An example of an indicator in this case might be a change in the number of teachers no longer using food as a reward. Other indicators can include the creation of a new non-food reward system where there was none, a change in the number of non-food rewards given or an increase in awareness among those most likely to give a reward.

5. Choose a measurement tool. A measurement tool is the instrument used to document change. Determine what paperwork is required to track changes. A measurement tool should be simple and may be something already in use. A questionnaire given to teachers periodically about what they are using for rewards may be enough to track behavior changes.

6. Collect the data. Document the indicated changes on the measurement tool. If possible, collect data at two different points in time to compare the effects of the changes.

7. Analyze the data. Look for changes that show successful implementation. Equally important are data that show the implementation plan is not working. Analyzing the data may reveal ways to adjust or improve the implementation process.

8. Communicate the findings. Report the results to your target audiences. Give feedback to those who gave input to the development of the plan, particularly if students were involved. Consider announcing a summary of the findings in newsletters, media releases or school board reports.

Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available During the School Day: School Stores and Concessions

EXAMPLE

Situation:

Studies show that during the past two decades, the percentage of overweight K-6 graders doubled while the percentage of overweight 7-12 graders tripled. American children, as a whole, get enough calories but lack the proper intake of key nutrients which include calcium, vitamin A, vitamin C and iron.

Challenge:

Foods offered in school stores and concessions are often influenced by student preferences for fast food, salty snacks and sweetened beverages. Changing student preferences takes time and education.

Goal:

All foods sold or offered to students during the school day will contribute to a balanced, healthy diet and healthy eating habits.

Objective:

Foods available in school stores and concessions will comply with the school nutrition guidelines.

Ideas for implementing change:

- Investigate school store/concession offerings.
- Solicit the help of school administrators, parents and organizations overseeing school stores and concessions and involve them in planning changes.
- Educate and involve students about healthy school store/concession choices.
- Develop or adopt food standards for school stores and concessions.
- Inform concession suppliers of the school's nutrition guidelines.
- Try something new.
- Prohibit or restrict access to school stores/concessions when lunch is being served.
- Provide teachers with curricula that incorporate healthy food choice messages.
- Promote healthy portion sizes.

Evaluate/Communicate/Promote:

In order for school stores/concessions policies to be successful, schools must establish a plan for measuring their progress. Documentation, evaluation and feedback are essential in sustaining local wellness policy achievements. Support for the implemented changes rests on communicating the intent, promoting the objective and publicizing the achievements.



Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available During the School Day: Steps to Evaluating School Stores and Concessions

EXAMPLE

1. Assess the situation. Inventory all the foods and beverages currently sold in school stores or concessions. Be sure to include the item, manufacturer, flavor, variety and portion size. *Example:*

Manufacturer	Item	Flavor Variety	Package Size	Nutrient Content		
				Cal	Fat	Sugar
Happy Grains	Corn chips	Cheese	1.75 oz	190	9 gm	1 gm
Refresh	Drink	Grape	8 fl oz	140	0	16 gm
Energize	Sports drink	Punch	20 fl oz	210	0	21 gm

Identify any products that do not align with the intent of a wellness policy goal. Consider calories, portion size and nutrient density.

2. Define success. Consider what changes can be made, determine a starting point and describe what school stores and concessions will look like if successful. Evaluation is easier to measure if success is defined early in the implementation planning process.

3. Develop an objective and action steps. Decide what should be done to improve school stores and concession choices. Talk to students about possible choices; they will have definite opinions. Consider the timing of a change. Changes over the summer may fare better than changes made in the middle of a school year.

4. Select an evaluation indicator.

An indicator is anything that signals a change in school stores/concessions as a result of the implementation plan. An indicator can be the number of concession items that meet the nutrition standards. Standards can be as simple as not offering any item that has sugar among the first three ingredients. Other indicators can include revenues generated, customer satisfaction or an increased consumption of the healthier choices.

5. Choose a measurement tool. A measurement tool is the instrument used to document change. Determine what paperwork is required to track the changes in school stores/concessions. A measurement tool should be simple and may be something already in use.

6. Collect the data. Document the indicated changes on the measurement tool. If possible, collect data at two different points in time to compare the effects of implementing the changes.

7. Analyze the data. Look for changes that show successful implementation. Equally important are data that show the implementation plan is not working. Analyzing the data may reveal ways to adjust the implementation process.

8. Communicate the findings. Report the results to your target audiences. Give feedback to those who gave input into the development of the plan, particularly if students were involved. Consider announcing a summary of the findings in newsletters, media releases or school board reports.

Steps to Measuring Change Worksheet

1. Goal (*List the wellness policy goal.*)

2. Develop objectives (*Describe the results you want to achieve.*)

3. Identify the action steps (*List the activities needed to accomplish the objective.*)

4. Select an evaluation indicator (*Determine what will change after implementing the action steps.*)

5. Choose a measurement tool (*Determine what quantitative or qualitative measure is required to track the changes or record information.*)

6. Collect the data (*Document the indicated changes on the measurement tool.*)

7. Analyze the data (*Examine the data and look for changes that demonstrate progress in reaching the goal.*)

8. Communicate the findings (*Consider reporting a summary of your findings in newsletters, local papers, media releases or school board reports.*)

Tips for Effective Communication

Clear, consistent and regular communication is critical to building a community that supports and embraces your wellness policy implementation plans. What you communicate will depend on your school and your wellness policy. Follow these principles for effective communication.

Be purposeful.

Decide what needs to be communicated and what you would like to accomplish. What is changing? Why? When? What do people need to know? What do you want to achieve – awareness, support, volunteering, behavior change, etc.?

Keep it short and simple.

Use common, everyday language and action verbs. Include only the most important information and offer a way for people to get more details.

Write with your audience in mind.

Start with the messages and information of most interest and concern to the target audience.

Repeat your message frequently.

People need to hear the same message many times before they recall it. Schedule communications on a regular basis.

Use a variety of methods.

These might include in-person, print, media and electronic methods. (*see chart below*)

Engage people in two-way communication.

Invite and gather feedback. Offer a way for people to ask questions, get involved or learn more.

Encourage everyone to be a messenger.

The most effective form of communication is one-to-one and in person. Ask everyone involved in your wellness committee to deliver the messages whenever they can.

COMMUNICATION METHODS

School Community Stakeholders	In-person	Print	Media	Electronic
Students	In class, clubs, student group presentations	Posters, Flyers, Student newspaper	School-wide announcement	School website
Parents and families	Open houses, events PTO meetings Site council meetings	Letters sent home Flyers and hand-outs	School newspaper	School website, Email
Teachers and staff	Staff meetings Site council meetings	Posters	School/staff newsletter	Email
Superintendent and school board	Phone calls, Reports to the school board	Letters	School newspaper, Local news media	Email, Website
Community organizations	Presentations	Letters	Local news media	Email

Wellness Policy Resources

September 2007

Wellness Policy Development

Wellness Policy Guidance – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) website provides information on how to create, implement and evaluate wellness policies that meet the requirements of federal law.

<http://www.teamnutrition.usda.gov>

Fit, Healthy, Ready to Learn: A School Health Policy Guide provides guidance for schools to establish policies on physical activity, nutrition and other health issues in the context of coordinated school health. This resource was developed by the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE).
<http://www.nasbe.org>

Wellness Policy Information – Action For Healthy Kids (AFHK) provides a searchable database of policies and resources from the national organization, states and schools. AFHK is a nonprofit organization that addresses childhood obesity and changes that can be made to improve nutrition and increase physical activity. <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org>

Local Wellness Policy: A Guide for Development and Local Wellness Policy Development Tool provides guidance to schools in wellness policy development. The guides were developed by the Minnesota Department of Education.
http://education.state.mn.us/mde/Learning_Support/FNS/Health_Wellness/index.html

Background Information, Guidelines, Reports and Fact Sheets

Preventing Childhood Obesity: Health in the Balance, 2005, is an Institute of Medicine (IOM) report that responds to Congress' charge to present an action plan to decrease the number of obese children and youth. The role of schools in preventing childhood obesity is addressed in the report. The IOM has a fact sheet available entitled *Schools Can Play a Role in Preventing Childhood Obesity*.

<http://www.iom.edu>

Guidelines for School Health Programs to Promote Lifelong Healthy Eating – This Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) document identifies school-based strategies most likely to be effective in promoting healthy eating in youth.

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth>

The Learning Connection: The Value of Improving Nutrition and Physical Activity in Our Schools – This Action for Healthy Kids report examines the impact of childhood obesity.

<http://www.actionforhealthykids.org>

The nutrition.gov website is a portal to food and human nutrition information across federal government agencies. www.nutrition.gov

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 5th edition – These science-based recommendations promote health and reduce the risk for major chronic diseases through diet and physical exercise.

<http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines>

RESOURCES

Wellness Policy Resources (continued)

Background Information, Guidelines, Reports and Fact Sheets (continued)

MyPyramid is USDA's food and activity guidance for healthy people two years and over. Key messages include: focus on fruits, vary your veggies, get calcium-rich foods, make half your grains whole, go lean with protein and know the limits on fats, salt and sugars. <http://www.mypyramid.gov>

Childhood Overweight – What the Research Tells Us is an easy-to-read fact sheet published by the Center for Health and Health Care in Schools, School of Public Health, George Washington Medical Center. <http://www.healthinschools.org>

Steps to a HealthierMN is funded, by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to reduce the burden of diabetes, overweight, obesity and asthma. The program focuses on three related risk factors: physical inactivity, poor nutrition and tobacco use. Steps to a HealthierMN promotes prevention programs in communities, schools, healthcare facilities and workplaces. Four Minnesota communities are participating: Willmar, Rochester, St. Paul and Minneapolis. www.stepstohealthiermn.com

Assessment Tools

School Health Index (SHI) is a self-assessment and planning tool that schools can use to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of their school health policies, curricula and services. Developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), this assessment can be obtained in print format or an online format can be used. <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth>

School Nutrition Environment – Foods Available at School

Changing the Scene: Improving the School Nutrition Environment – This USDA Team Nutrition tool kit addresses the entire school nutrition environment. This kit can help schools develop a comprehensive approach to promoting healthy eating and physical activity. <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/library.html>

Making It Happen describes six strategies that schools have used to improve the nutritional quality of foods and beverages offered at school. It tells the stories of 32 schools that have successfully implemented these strategies. The key message of the stories is that kids will buy and eat healthful foods and beverages and schools can make money from healthful options. <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov> or <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth>

Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools: Leading the Way Toward Healthier Youth is a report issued in April 2007 from the Institute of Medicine together with the Centers for Disease Control. The report reviews and provides recommendations about appropriate nutrition standards for the availability, sale, content and consumption of foods and beverages in schools. The recommendations and guidelines are for use by schools in developing their nutrition guidelines for foods available in schools during the school day. <http://www.nap.edu>

Healthy Foods for Kids-Guidelines for Good Nutrition at School was developed by Action For Healthy Kids MN. It provides guidelines for foods available in schools outside the reimbursable school meal programs. <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org> Click on State-by-State Action

RESOURCES

Wellness Policy Resources (continued)

Beverage, Snack and Competitive Food Guidelines – Alliance for A Healthier Generation is a joint initiative of the William J. Clinton Foundation and the American Heart Association. The goal of the Alliance is to stop the increase in childhood obesity and help kids make healthy lifestyle choices. The beverage and snack guidelines were developed in collaboration with industry partners. <http://www.healthiergeneration.org>

Nutrition Curriculum

MyPyramid for Kids classroom materials help elementary students learn the *MyPyramid* food guidance system. Lesson plans are available for teachers with classroom materials at three levels: Level 1 (grades 1-2); Level 2 (grades 3-4); and Level 3 (grades 5-6). <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/resources/mypyramidclassroom.html>

Nutrition Essentials, Teaching Tools for Healthy Choices will help teens learn skills for making food and physical activity choices. There are six easy-to-use lessons that focus on learning about the MyPyramid and the amount of food you need, choosing foods for their nutrients, estimating the amount of food you need for a day and being active. This resource can be downloaded from the Team Nutrition website.

<http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/nutritionessentials.html>

The Power of Choice: Helping Youth Make Healthy Eating and Fitness Decisions is intended for after-school program leaders working with adolescents. It's full of quick, simple things to do with kids. This resource has lessons on physical activity, helpings vs. servings, label reading, choosing snacks, fast food choices, beverages and what to do when you have the urge to splurge. http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/power_of_choice.html

CATCH (Coordinated Approach To Child Health) has three separate resources. There is a *CATCH Go For Health* series, an elementary classroom health education curriculum that uses a group of cartoon characters, Hearty Heart and Friends, to bring the messages that support healthy eating and physical activity. CATCH PE provides games, fitness activities and skill development activities. It is developed for three grade groupings: K-2nd grade, 2-5th grade and 6-8th grade. CATCH Kid Club (CKC) brings activity to after-school and community programs for children in grades K-5. CKC is composed of nutrition education materials and a physical activity component. <http://www.catchinfo.org>

Planet Health aims to improve activity and dietary behaviors among 6th, 7th and 8th grade students. It is an interdisciplinary curriculum that infuses lessons into language arts, math, science, social studies and physical education classes. <http://www.humankinetics.com>

TEENS (Teens Eating for Energy and Nutrition at School) is a program that focuses on increasing students' intake of fruits, vegetables and lower fat foods. The curriculum consists of classroom, school-wide and family components for 7th and 8th grade students. There are 10 lessons at each grade. TEENS uses trained peer leaders in the 7th grade and behavior modification at the 8th grade level. This program involves working with school food services staff to increase the offerings of fruits and vegetables and healthier snacks. http://www.epi.umn.edu/cyhp/r_teens.html

5 A Day Power Plus aims at increasing the fruit and vegetable consumption of 4th and 5th grade students. The program includes classroom lessons, home activities, school food service participation and industry support. <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/chp/powerplus/index.html>

RESOURCES

Wellness Policy Resources (continued)

Nutrition Curriculum (continued)

Eat Well & Keep Moving is an interdisciplinary nutrition and physical activity curriculum designed to decrease consumption of high fat foods, increase intake of fruits and vegetables, reduce TV watching and increase physical activity in children at the upper elementary level. The classroom lessons are ready to use. The lessons are designed for use in language arts, math, science, social studies and physical education classes. <http://www.humankinetics.com>

Media-Smart Youth: Eat, Think, and Be Active! is an interactive after-school program for youth ages 11-13. It is designed to teach kids to think critically about the media's messages, especially in the areas of nutrition and physical activity, and to develop the skills to make good decisions. <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/msy>

We Can! – Ways to Enhance Children's Activity and Nutrition is a national program designed for families and communities to help children achieve healthy weight. This program focuses on three behaviors: improved food choices, increased physical activity and reduced screen time. <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/>

Physical Activity

Eat Well & Keep Moving – see description at left

Planet Health – see description on previous page

Brain Breaks is a collection of activities for students in grades K-6. The physical activity is integrated into a variety of subject areas including math, science, social studies and language arts. <http://www.emc.cmich.edu/brainbreaks/default.html>

Energizers are short (10-minute) classroom-based physical activities that integrate physical activity with academic concepts for students in elementary and middle school. <http://www.ncpe4me.com/energizers.html>

TAKE 10!® is a classroom-based physical activity program for K-5th grade students that integrates physical activity into language arts, math, social studies and health through 10-minute physical activity. This physical activity program was developed by the International Life Science Institute (ILSI) Research Foundation. <http://www.take10.net>

Kids Walk-to-School – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website has resource materials to help communities explore ways kids can walk safely to school. <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/>



RESOURCES

Wellness Policy Resources (continued)

School Meal Programs

Menu Planning Guide describes the menu planning options, federal nutrient standards, dietary guidelines and steps to planning breakfast and lunch menus for school-age children. <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/menuplanner.html>

Fruits and Vegetables Galore is a resource packed with tips on planning, purchasing, protecting, preparing, presenting and promoting fruits and vegetables.

http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/fv_galore.html

The Road to SMI Success: A Guide for School Food Service Directors provides information for successfully implementing USDA's School Meal Initiative (SMI). The SMI focuses on meeting the Dietary Guidelines and federal nutrient standards for school meals. The resource includes information on menu planning options, federal nutrient standards, promoting healthy school meals and preparing for a SMI review.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources>

Staff Wellness

School Employee Wellness: A Guide for Protecting the Assets of Our Nation's Schools is a comprehensive guide providing information and practical tools for school employee wellness programs. Developed by the Directors of Health Promotions and Education, this guide can be downloaded for free.

<http://www.schoolempwell.org>

Selected Organizations with Nutrition, Physical Activity or Wellness Policy Resources

Minnesota Department of Education
http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Learning_Support/FNS/index.html

United States Department of Agriculture

Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
www.usda.gov/cnpp

Food and Nutrition Information Center
www.nal.usda.gov/fnic

Team Nutrition, Food and Nutrition Services
www.fns.usda.gov/tn

National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI)
www.nfsmi.org

Action for Healthy Kids
www.actionforhealthykids.org

Alliance for a Healthier Generation
www.healthiergeneration.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth

School Nutrition Association
www.schoolnutrition.org

California Project LEAN (Leaders Encouraging Activity and Nutrition)
www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org